

OREM CITY COUNCIL/ALPINE SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
56 North State, Orem, Utah
June 11, 2014

This meeting was for discussion purposes only. No official action was taken.

CONDUCTING	Mayor Richard Brunst
OREM ELECTED OFFICIALS	Mayor Richard Brunst; Councilmembers Hans Andersen, Margaret Black, Tom Macdonald, and Mark Seastrand, and Brent Sumner Councilmember David Spencer participated electronically
OREM STAFF	Jamie Davidson, City Manager; Brenn Bybee, Assistant City Manager; Karl Hirst, Recreation Director; and Taraleigh Gray, Deputy City Recorder
ALPINE BOARD OF EDUCATION	Jodee Sundberg, John Burton, Scott Carlson
ALPINE SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMIN.	Vern Henshaw, Superintendent; Rob Smith, Assistant Superintendent
INVOCATION	Brenn Bybee

Mayor Brunst invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Items of Common Interest

Cherry Hill Ribbon Cutting

Mr. Seastrand said he appreciated the ribbon cutting ceremony at Cherry Hill. It was very well done and received well by the community. They were thrilled to have school lunch back. Mayor Brunst concurred.

In response to query from Mr. Macdonald about the situation with the school kitchens, Mr. Smith said they were torn out at one point. The teachers did well to facilitate the transition.

Vineyard Growth

At the request of the Mayor, Mr. Henshaw reviewed a broad picture of anticipated growth in the Vineyard area. They have been able to meet the current needs using trailers, but that will only go so far. The district is exploring building utilization, including possible realignment of school boundaries. It is better to use existing buildings than to jump in and construct new ones. Some boundary adjustments would solve short-term issues. It comes down to either putting the trailers in Vineyard or putting them in another school and bussing the children there.

Mr. Henshaw said, long term, the district expected two elementary schools could handle the growth. It might be better to building the school sooner, but that was yet to be determined. It was a question of “when” and not “if” additional schools would be needed. He said it was better to set that kind of plan in place, before people moved into an area and avoid shifting students later.

Mayor Brunst inquired about the need for an additional school bond.

Mr. Henshaw said if there was a critical need, they could probably construct an elementary school. Any future bonding was more likely to go for a high school or junior high school in other parts of the district.

Mr. Smith said they were projecting 850 students at Vineyard in the fall. They believed two portable classrooms would facilitate the added students. Years ago they identified the location for a possible school sight. Mr. Smith said he had met with one of the developers in Vineyard, Woodside Homes, and they had identified a school site in their development. The Vineyard Town Council would be looking at the Woodside Homes development. Boundary adjustments for the junior high schools had already been made.

The eventual rebuild of Orem Junior was already underway. Mr. Smith said the Board had been working to address the need to remodel existing schools as well as anticipated growth. Their view was for safety—seismic issues—as well as the delivery of instruction. He reviewed some of the work being done at various schools in Orem, concluding that they believe there would be sufficient space in the high schools and junior high schools to accommodate the growth in Vineyard.

Mayor Brunst asked how the district planned to address technology, especially in the high schools.

Mr. Henshaw said just that morning they had discussed the problem of developing a vision for technology, considering how quickly technology changed. They were struggling to ensure the infrastructure was in place even to use the technology. Then the teachers have to be trained to use the technology in the classroom. It is important to use it in a way that enhances learning. A variety of “pilot programs” were being used in several schools. Opening the door to “bring your own device” to all students would create bandwidth capacity problems.

Mr. Henshaw stated that, in his personal opinion, there would be few textbooks within five years. There needs to be safeguard in place for accessing technology.

Ms. Sundberg said the school board had to be forward thinking as well. There have been some changes in the technology department to help the district move in the right direction. Becky Lockhart’s bill—that did not pass—might have been useful, especially with the legislature offering to fund \$26-28 million.

Mayor Brunst remarked that he had seen studies showing that students who used technology scored 30 percent higher in their test scores. It seemed they were more engaged than just talking.

Mr. Smith said the current year's budget for technology was \$4.3 million. The board had been building infrastructure for technology for years. All the buildings were connected with fiber. As a result, the district had been able to do things that other districts had not.

Mayor Brunst asked if the textbooks were phased out whether some of the money would go toward technology.

Mr. Henshaw said that was already happening. There were plenty of software providers with curriculum content, and teachers were free to choose their curriculums. One challenge has been to having a technology director who understood the classroom component and the workings of the educators. So, the district made some shifts. They are experimenting to find the best usages and then share that information with the schools.

Mr. Andersen asked about student population.

Mr. Henshaw said over the last several years, the enrollment was somewhat stable, kindergarten through twelfth grade. There had been pockets of growth.

Gangs

Mr. Andersen said the police spoke about gangs and wondered how the school district handled children in gangs.

Mr. Henshaw said he had met with all the administrators over the last several days. They were appreciative for the resource officers in Orem schools. They tried not to stereotype or stigmatize students. There were certain behaviors that could be identified as potential problems. The most important thing was to get the students involved in wholesome activities at the school and have an attachment at the school. Gangs developed because of a need for young people to have an attachment and a means of validation. Teachers, advisors, and various organizations were a way to do that.

Mr. Macdonald asked if there had been an increase in tagging.

Mr. Henshaw said it some of the tagging came with the end of school, making statements when school was out. Mrs. Black said there had been some tagging near Timpanogos High School.

Mayor Brunst said he had read that Orem's projected growth over the next forty years could reach 180,000. Mrs. Black indicated that last number she had heard was only 120,000. The Mayor noted that 1,100 apartments had been approved.

Mr. Davidson said the growth had been 3-5 percent per year over the last 10 years.

University Place

Mr. Henshaw inquired about the University Place project.

Mayor Brunst said they were excited about it. He reviewed some of the changes included as part of the project, including office building, apartments, and enlarging stores. The mall envisioned more of a mixed-use environment there and would take on a new look.

Mr. Davidson observed that Woodbury Corporation was working quite hard to move away from the word “mall” since they were trying to create a sense of “place” with the redevelopment. There would be a significant housing component. The commercial component was focused more on office and employment than on retail. Some retail would be added but their main efforts would be on maximizing the efficiencies of existing retail. One of the things Orem has historically struggled with is the lack of a city center gathering place. They had a plan with many phases that could take several years to complete. The City hoped it would dramatically change not only the existing campus but areas around it. Mr. Davison noted Woodbury had pulled the first building office permit and was preleasing the second building. There was a significant transportation factor to facilitate mobility, not only north and south but east and west as well.

Mr. Henshaw asked about any possible tax increment.

Mr. Davidson said there had been some initial meetings with Woodbury about the scope of the project. Their approach to assessed value was different from the City’s. Some meetings, scheduled with the City Council later in the month, would include discussions about infrastructure and utilities. The City’s utilities in the area are quite old, so the timing of the project is good for Orem.

Mr. Davidson said they were concerned, as a community, feeling they were at a critical crossroad. Assessed evaluation impacts Orem as well as the school district. He said they are concerned those are not going in the right direction. Mr. Davidson said he anticipates having those discussion with the school district in the near future.

Mr. Henshaw said they had communicated that they understood their role in the partnership and wanted to be “at the table” for the conversations.

Mr. Davidson said the City had not engaged in those conversations—or lack thereof—and that had been deliberate. He said he has been approached several times about various projects. His initial response has been that they were not worth to the relationship with the school district. Any conversation should be about a legacy project, not just for the City but for the other taxing entities, and not just for ten years to come but for fifty years to come. With University Place, they were talking about a transformational project that would renew the face of Orem.

American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)

Mrs. Sundberg said she had received information from someone about an article about that group which quoted Utah legislator, Senator Howard Stephenson which can be found at <http://www.progressive.org/news/2014/05/187687/alec-otherworld>. Part of the article said:

As Utah Senator Howard Stephenson stated to an Education subcommittee, “We need to stomp out local control.” School boards and city councils take away liberties quicker than the federal government, he insisted. Local governing entities can be a roadblock to the ALEC agenda, so their power needs to be preempted and removed.

Set Date and Time for Next

The next meeting was scheduled for September 3, 2014, at noon in Orem.

The meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Donna R. Weaver, City Recorder

Approved: May 27, 2014